

cultural values which have been forced upon the Crow with varying degrees of success. Each reflects an affective reorientation in the direction of native cultural values. Big-Day, in fact, was consciously seeking a nativistic religion which would "bring a new life to the Indian." It is probably no accident that he was the first of the Crow leaders to participate in the Shoshone Sundance and to bring it to the Crow with the assistance of a Shoshone leader who also demonstrates a lack of adjustment to his own culture.

It is upon this base of general cultural dissatisfaction that the life crises which confronted each of the above leaders acted as catalytic agents. It is true that the initial attraction to the Shoshone Sundance was grounded in curiosity, and that this factor was also present in the trial participations of Big-Day, Hill, and Old-Coyote, but the crises of sickness and of war presented problems which demanded solution. The now familiar Sundance held the promise of reward, and, during the course of their participation in the dance, each of these Crow leaders has been reinforced in his faith in this native form of worship.

This reinforcement is most clearly seen in the case of Big-Day, but it is also observable in the experiences of Hill and Old-Coyote. Following the initial trial participations of these two men, they were elevated to a position of prominence in the Sundance under the sponsorship of the Shoshone leader. Moreover, they were presented with medicine feathers which served partially to allay their war-derived anxieties. Gradually they developed a genuine faith in the dance, rationalizing the continued safety of their sons as an effect of their participation in the Sundance.

In conclusion, the three Crow leaders, Big-Day, Hill, and Old-Coyote, reveal that both cultural and individual factors were operative in their attitudes toward and participation in the Sundance. Each shared the following: (1) a dissatisfaction with the general cultural situation, (2) a reorientation of their values around the native culture and specifically in native religious expressions, (3) life crises which demanded solution and for which they turned to a nativistic religious expression, and (4) a progressive reinforcement which confirmed them in the native direction which they had taken.

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#### THE PUZZLE OF HULA<sup>1</sup>

By PHILIPPA POLLENZ

THE ENTIRE area of Polynesia, from New Zealand to Hawaii to Easter Island, exhibits a fairly homogeneous dance pattern, especially in the forms and type of movement. Taking New Zealand as a starting point we find:

In the dance of the Maoris, as in their arts, a well-defined constructive scheme. The first movement was the extension of the arms forward to mark space from the rank in front. Then, by extending the arms sideways, the space was measured from the person at either side. There followed a slight movement of the feet and hands to set the rhythm, and the dance began.<sup>2</sup>

Other writers found in the dance of the Maoris certain violent elements which they could not accurately describe:

One of the young lady musicians . . . glides into the native measure of the dance. She "pukanas" with her eyes, now set and glassy, now wildly rolling, throws her shapely head back and gives herself up to the elemental passion of the "kanikani" of woven paces and waving hands. All the muscles of her trunk and lower limbs seem to be at work, the lascivious spirit of the untamed sex instinct shines out in her.<sup>3</sup>

Of still further interest is the war dance:<sup>4</sup>

The dances of the Maori are action and posture movements, always accompanied by song; their variety covers many incidents and events of life . . . the War Dance was one of scorn, hatred, threats, defiance, revenge, and tremendously vigorous in voice, sentiment and action . . . men stood at attention with their feet about 24" apart. . . . The leader shouted a few key words, and as one man the performers roared a response, took up the song, extended their palms down and vibrated their open hands in an imitation of the quivering sunlight on a very bright day. At a shout from the leader, the arms lost their rigidity and the men smacked their palms on their breasts or in front of their thighs . . . the movements developed precisely until arms and legs were in well-ordered activity, bodies jerking in spasms of contortion, eyeballs rolling and voices roaring vicious words.<sup>5</sup>

This violence in movement, this accent on spasmodic jerking is not unique. Many areas outside of Polynesia have dances where the emphasis is on rapid

<sup>1</sup> The material for this study was obtained on a field trip to Hawaii in the spring of 1947. Previous to that time the writer spent many months with Hawaiian informants in New York. The observations about Hindu Dance forms were obtained by talks with two leading Indian dancers—Ram Gopal and Bhupesh Guha. This paper is only a part of an intensive study of Polynesian dance forms.

<sup>2</sup> Del Mar, 1924, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Cowan, 1910, p. 345.

<sup>4</sup> Many writers erroneously call the War Dance the *haka*. According to Dr. Peter Buck, the *haka* is a different type, entirely differentiated from the War Dance.

<sup>5</sup> Donne, 1927, p. 125.

and extensive muscular contortion, and this type of motion is extremely common in Africa and Melanesia. However, in the Pacific Islands, this violence is just an adjunct to other varieties of movement. It is found in the Marquesas, where:

their dancing consists in hopping for a considerable time on the same spot, frequently raising the hands in the air and moving the fingers with great velocity.<sup>6</sup>

The performers in the dances make many springs and pantomimic gestures, with quick movements of the hands and arms, without moving much from one spot. It seems as if the people . . . mean to represent in their pantomimic dances most of the common actions of life.<sup>7</sup>

The characteristic feature of this dance (*haka pahaka*) was that it was performed by the dancer on one foot and both arms being extended.<sup>8</sup>

Pantomimic dancing is also highly developed in the Marquesas, especially in the dances for men.

The main part for the men in the Marquesas consists in leg and arm movements expressing the letters of a code of signalling which is really the basis of the dance . . . the women's part consists in standing in one spot, holding the shoulders and head absolutely motionless, while the hips and abdomen are thrust forward, are swayed from side to side, the hands being occasionally used for slight gestures.<sup>9</sup>

That pantomime is an outstanding feature of most Polynesian dance patterning can be readily illustrated by examples from Samoa:

Dancing in the form of the *Siva* and *Poula* contained a number of figures composed of different movements and postures. These were performed by groups. . . . Usually after combined figures, individual dancing was indulged in. In all groups dancing, the movements were made in unison and faultless time was the criterion of excellence.<sup>10</sup>

Their dancing consists of a great deal of pantomime—it might almost be called acting—and the hips, shoulders and arms are often much moved without the dancer stirring from the one place . . . in each part there seems a premier danseur whose movements the others closely follow, but it is not always so. . . . Every joint is supple and active and strong and they have the freedom of movement of a trained ballet dancer.<sup>11</sup>

This pantomime is even more apparent in the *taololo*:

When they came again there would be three or four of them, leaping and gesticulating, and they would be followed by the whole group of the village, moving unmarshalled

<sup>6</sup> Krusenstern 1813, p. 176.

<sup>7</sup> Langsdorff, 1813, p. 158.

<sup>8</sup> Handy, 1923, p. 305.

<sup>9</sup> Handy, 1923, p. 308.

<sup>10</sup> Buck, 1930, p. 534.

<sup>11</sup> St. Johnston, 1889, p. 192.

and dragging their steps as they sang. Again and again the young braves skirmished in advance only to retreat once more. They yelled, they ran hither and thither, they postured, they threatened, they threw their long-bladed axes into the air, pirouetted and caught them as they fell. Their performance produced all the harmless thrills of the best war dance.<sup>12</sup>

Drill-like maneuvers, with or without weapons, are also an integral feature of many of the dances of the Pacific Islands. Quadrille-like dance patterning is to be found all over this area, perhaps most frequently in Uvea<sup>13</sup> and Futuna.<sup>14</sup>

On Easter Island, we find a slight refinement of gesture, calculated to display grace and elegance, rather than violence. The dances have been compared to the *Odori* performed by the Geisha girls in Japan.<sup>15</sup> Other writers have also found these dances:

different from the usual Polynesian type. While in Samoa they sit and swing their hips, making movements with the arms, here they stay on one foot and extend the other by jerks following exactly the rhythm of the song. From the movement it could be inferred that the so-called recreational dances were quite immoral.<sup>16</sup>

This association of languid motion with immorality was assumed by many of the early visitors to Polynesia. In the Society Islands Bennett found:

The performers in the native dances display much agility; but their attitudes are opposed to our ideas of poetry of motion, nor do they always convey the most delicate illusions: in short, the desire of the missionaries and steady natives to suppress this amusement is equally in accordance with good taste and morals.<sup>17</sup>

However, other less-biased observers saw in these dances expressions of great beauty and grace. On Tonga, one early explorer was so impressed by an ancient dance that he wrote:

It is a dance very difficult to execute, not only on account of the accompanying gesture, but also of the singing. . . . The dancers, who are all men, in the meanwhile perform their evolutions round the chorus, exhibiting a great variety of very graceful movements with the arms and feet, accompanied by expressions of countenance suitable to the character of the dance which is that (abstractedly) of a manly and noble spirit.<sup>18</sup>

The ideas of fluidity and grace in motion are upheld throughout most of this area. On Niue:

The people did not sing in former times, but rather chanted as in Hawaiian mele. Also

<sup>12</sup> Lenwood, 1917, p. 56.

<sup>13</sup> See Burrows, 1937, pp. 147-150.

<sup>14</sup> See Burrows, 1936, pp. 213-220.

<sup>15</sup> Thompson, 1889, p. 469.

<sup>16</sup> Geiseler, 1883, p. 41.

<sup>17</sup> Bennett, 1840, p. 142.

<sup>18</sup> Martin, 1818, p. 329.

they did not actually dance . . . but revolved their bodies and moved their feet and body in a rhythmic swaying fashion, accompanied by the swaying of their arms.<sup>19</sup>

And on Rarotonga:

Youths and girls in pairs formed a circle around the dense group of musicians, took a few steps, then faced one another and laughed gleefully, performed the hula movements. . . . The effect was most striking as the dancers moved around the circle, stopping frequently to rotate the hips and wriggle the legs in a manner incapable of imitation by a European.<sup>20</sup>

These random examples from the literature serve to give an approximate idea of the type of dance prevailing in Polynesia. Handy summed up the situation briefly when he wrote:

The Polynesian islands to the north of New Zealand are noted for their erotic dances which are built upon the principle of suggestive posturing and movement of the abdominal parts of the body, shivering and the like. In the dancing that is to be seen today (and this apparently held true in ancient times) is every grade from extreme refinement such as is typical of the best Samoan and some Hawaiian performances, to the animal-like outbursts of passion that are almost terrifying to the uninitiated onlooker, such as are still to be seen in the Tuamotu Islands.<sup>21</sup>

We can, therefore, define certain qualities which will be found in the dances of this area. We expect some violence in physical movement, with hopping, jumps or at least explosive gesture, and in some cases an intense hip movement. We expect some sort of gesture pantomime, with an emphasis on "acting out" a dance or song, and with this a fair amount of skill or virtuosity displayed in executing the motions. There is an extensive use of some sort of hand symbolism. In addition, we would find the prevalence of seated dances, executed usually with instruments, or accompanied by hand clapping or chest slapping.

Our problem is to determine exactly how Hawaiian *hulas* fit into the general Polynesian pattern. Hulas, the dances of Hawaii, are extremely varied in form and content, and present many features which do not conform to the generalized Pacific patterning. Most hulas can be classified very simply, although some anthropologists<sup>22</sup> have drawn up elaborate systems of classification, based mainly on the type of accompaniment. Hulas danced to the accompaniment of a calabash gourd (*ipu*) were called *hula ipu*, etc. For our purpose, it is enough to distinguish the seated dances from the standing dances.

<sup>19</sup> Loeb, 1926, p. 122.

<sup>20</sup> Whitley 1933, p. 514.

<sup>21</sup> Handy, 1927, p. 211.

<sup>22</sup> See Emerson's (1909) classification. Roberts (1926) also devoted pp. 77-177 to a discussion of hula types.

The seated hulas of Hawaii do not differ too radically from the seated dances of the other Polynesian islands. In Hawaii, however, the dancer sits on her knees, while in other parts of the area it is customary for the dancer to sit with the knees crossed.

A pantomime is enacted out in the dance, while the singer tells the story. This pantomime may be augmented by the use of an instrument like a rattle or stick. The dancer will go through a series of stereotyped gestures which are illustrative of the text of the accompanying song. See Figs. 1 and 2.<sup>23</sup>



FIG. 1. Gestures made with a *pili* (split bamboo rattle) during a seated dance. This particular series shows canoe-paddling.

However, it is in the standing hulas that we find great departures from the characteristic Polynesian pattern. The hulas which are performed in a standing position have two very definite types of movement. As a basic step, the dancer, in an attitude with the knees bent, keeps up a steady undulating movement with the hips, covering little space. The technique for executing this movement rests upon a series of shifts in weight, from one foot to the other.<sup>24</sup> The more important part of the dance depends upon an extensive play of the hands, which go through a series of stereotyped gestures, each of which has some symbolic meaning. These gestures actually spell out the story of the dance, which is expressed in the text and music. The use of mime to tell out a story is not uncommon in Polynesia, but in other islands the pantomime is more realistic, or at least naturalistic: the hunter stalks his prey, using the entire body; the daily occurrence of events—courtship, war, harvesting—all are

<sup>23</sup> This sketch, and those that follow, are all made from the writer's personal notes and observations, in the field and in performance.

<sup>24</sup> For further detail see Homsey, 1940, p. 4; Cambell and Hogue, 1930 pp. 15, 16; and the illustrations in Miller, 1935.

carried out in complete expression. The body of the dancer conveys the picture to the audience, and little or nothing is left to the imagination. In Hawaii the form of the pantomime is definitely limited, and attention is focused on the hands by underplaying the other parts of the body. Here we have a specific meaning assigned to a hand movement, but each gesture functions as a separate entity. Each can be used over and over again whenever that specific meaning is required. Hand symbolism employs the old device of a part for a whole: the symbol of a roof stands for the whole house, the ripple of waves for the sea. Walking, flowers, rain, kings, princesses, mountains, sky, stars, all can be ex-



FIG. 2. Gestures for a seated hula. This series shows "waves."

pressed by the use of specific hand gestures. These are rigid and unchanging and are indeed the essence of hula.

The prevalence of this vocabulary of hand symbolism is rather puzzling. Beckwith attempted to explain their occurrence in Hawaii by implying:

It looks as if the dance were made up, like a sign alphabet, of conventionalized physiological reactions to special emotional suggestions, perhaps to the excitation of rhythmical beats.<sup>25</sup>

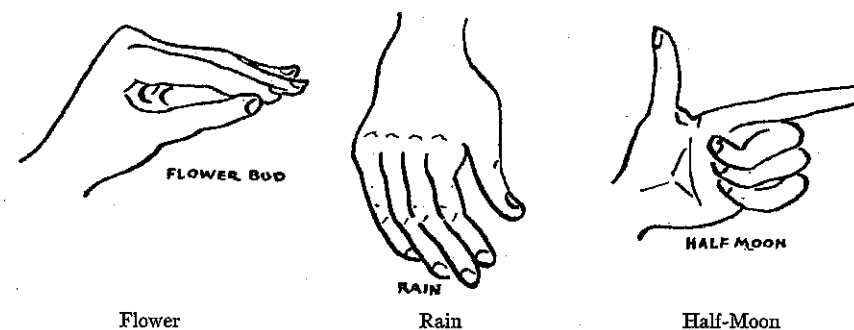
Certainly in other parts of Polynesia we find a form of incomplete symbolism—a few gestures interspersed in the general choreography. In the Marquesas,

<sup>25</sup> Beckwith, 1916, p. 412.

the men go through a kind of drill, in which the arms and hands spell out certain letters of the alphabet, and which seems to resemble a sort of primitive signalling system.<sup>26</sup> However, Hawaii appears to be the only group to utilize a complete vocabulary of hand gestures.

This is curious, for while we can find no other example within Polynesia, we can find examples outside of this area. Indonesia and especially India have dance styles which depend largely upon a full and extensive series of hand gestures. In India we have great formalization of movement, and each symbol is made with absolute precision, allowing no variation. If we examine the hand gestures used in India and compare them with those of Hawaii, we find a great many similarities. In both India and Hawaii, the production of the gesture is the same; the movement flows out from the shoulder and wrist, and ends up in the delicately curling fingers. We have chosen a few of the more striking similarities; these gestures are significant not because they are the same in both areas, but because they have the same meanings assigned to them.

Interesting as this comparison may be, selection of five gestures out of a possible two thousand in India and perhaps four hundred in Hawaii proves



Flower  
All fingers kept straight are brought together and the fingertips touch.

In India: This gesture is used for flower bud. Also when conveyed to mouth and outward it means "speech."

In Hawaii: Same, means flower. When this gesture is made at mouth, means "talk" or "song."

Rain  
This is a gesture for two hands, although only one is held in the sketch. The hand is bent down from the wrist, fingers relaxed.

In India: This symbol means "rain" or "rain clouds."

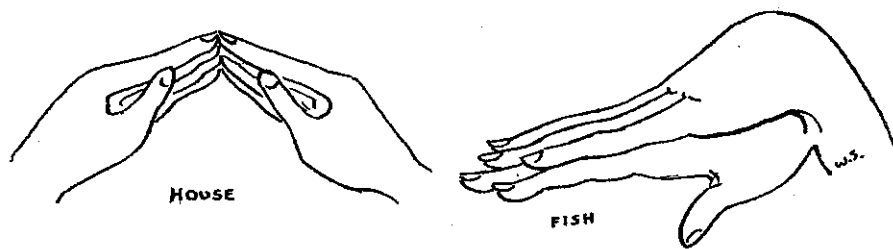
In Hawaii: Hands brought flutteringly down, stand for "rain."

Half-Moon  
The thumb and index finger are stretched out; the other three fingers are bent in, touching the palm.

In India: This gesture means "Moon." When placed at the ear, it means "Listen to me."

In Hawaii: (Fingers are slightly more unbent) symbol used for moon, but it is made with both hands. When one hand is placed at the ear, also means "Listen."

<sup>26</sup> Handy, 1923, p. 308.



House

The hands, fingers together, are cupped slightly, opposing fingertips touching.

In India: Symbol, when held at chest level, means "house."

In Hawaii: Same.

Fish

One hand is stretched out in front; the other is placed upon it, palm down. The two thumbs are stretched out and flutter up and down.

In India:<sup>27</sup> This symbol is used for "fish."

In Hawaii: This same gesture also means fish.

nothing except possible coincidence. But the fact that there is a basic idea of dance movement common to both India and Hawaii is important. In both areas we have similarity of certain pantomimic elements; this is not unusual, since movements depicting common emotions such as fear, admiration, rage, are very similar despite differences in dance techniques. But India and Hawaii both have similar conceptions of movement: the idea of a downward movement to suggest death. In India the two palms are brought together, the fingers pointing down; this means death. In Hawaii the downward push means death or nothingness. The idea of entwining the fingers to express unity or marriage is found in both areas.

It is noticeable that the Hawaiian hip movement is dissimilar from the Hindu. Nautch, the type of Indian dancing which employs such a movement, forces the hip out to the side. The Hawaiian tendency is to push the hip up. However, in both cases, unusual strain is put upon the muscles in calf and ankle, and overdevelopment of the ankles is characteristic of the ancient Hawaiian dancer. Similar, too, is the extreme professionalization of dance in both areas. Hindu dancers are rigorously trained from childhood, and function almost as a separate caste. Hawaii, of all Polynesia, was the only possessor of schools for hula dancers, and was the only one to possess professional troupes. In all the other islands, dance was not part of a professional's duties, but rather was performed by amateurs. However, the organization of the hula school bears some similarities to the organization of the Areoi societies in other parts of Polynesia.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The definitions of the Hindu gestures given here are those accepted by all professional Hindu dancers. They can be found in Hughes, 1941, pp. 30ff.

<sup>28</sup> Andersen, 1928, p. 445.

Hindu hand movements are found throughout Indonesia, in the Srimpis of the Javanese—where "the fingers tremble as if they had a life of their own,"<sup>29</sup> and in the dances of Bali, which have become extremely stereotyped.<sup>30</sup>

We cannot yet trace a definite development of dance technique from India through Indonesia to Hawaii. But the fact remains that there are many similarities: elaborate formalized hand symbols (modified in Java by the scarf and in Bali by the fan), formalized dance schools with religious ties, and a class of professional dancers.

Hula is puzzling in that it seems to combine so many different elements. In its technique it seems to depend upon some sort of Hinduized ancestry. Yet in its carefree manner of performance, in its mimetic animal dances, and its free and easy style it bears close similarities to the rest of Polynesia. Hawaii seems to stand at a midpoint between two techniques. Symbolic representations, controlled movement—these hula elements seem to come from India. Naturalistic pantomime and spontaneity of performance stem from Polynesian influences. Such similarities encourage the belief that Hawaii owes a great deal of its dance fundamentals to Indonesia, and some of its ideas of performance to other Polynesian examples.

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<sup>29</sup> Kleen, 1936, p. 126.

<sup>30</sup> Covarrubias, 1936, p. 607.

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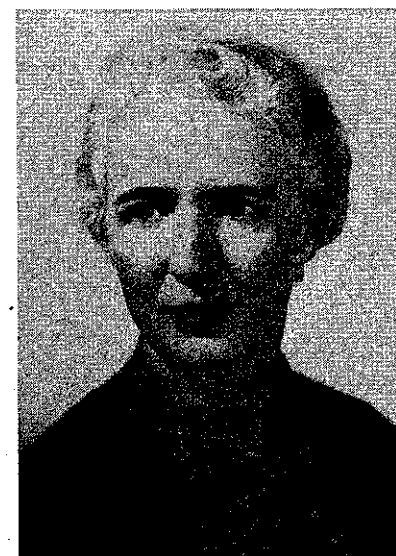
## LILA MORRIS O'NEALE: 1886-1948

By MARGARET W. HARRISON

LILA MORRIS O'NEALE was born in Buxton, North Dakota, November 2, 1886, and died after a brief illness February 2, 1948, in Oakland, California. She was Professor of Decorative Art and Associate Curator of Textiles in the Museum of Anthropology, University of California.

A unique contribution places Miss O'Neale among the ranking anthropologists. She pioneered in applying to the study of culture a rare technical knowledge of one of man's primal and universal employments: weaving. Textiles, as an expression of material and aesthetic attainment, cast light on the values and reactions of prehistoric peoples and offer a basis of comparison with those of moderns, whose continued interest in use and design is a cultural inheritance. But in so few parts of the world are topography, climate, and burial customs favorable for their preservation in sufficient quantities to permit an appreciation of the artistic and technical accomplishments of their makers that these perishable remains of early craftsmanship deserve, even require, the threefold approach of technology, art, and science. This exceptional combination Miss O'Neale possessed; during the second half of her career her outlook was as much that of an anthropologist as of a teacher of decorative art or of a technician.

Where others have treated the subject of prehistoric textiles from their historical, artistic, or interpretative aspects, she added the analysis of their structural and decorative techniques as culture traits. Each region develops and may exchange with others tangibles that are reflected in its textile art. Local conventions, tastes, and skills, their spread along trade routes, are woven into the products of ancient looms. As components of art styles, pattern motifs are a key to the influence of one civilization on another; structural techniques point to a skill as being elementary or perfected. To know the exact fineness of a "fine" texture has more than immediate purpose. "It may be a boresome detail," says R. H. Lowie, "whether the fragments of a Peruvian fabric were originally of one web, but it is of the utmost importance to ascertain how these textiles rank among those of the world; and only technical considerations of the textile expert can tell us."



LILA MORRIS O'NEALE